# New Perspectives on Prevalence and Risk Factors of Pedophilic Sexual Interest

Symposium Chair: Alexander F. Schmidt, Ph.D.

This symposium presents data from a large German multi-site research project on risk factors of pedophilic sexual interest and child sexual abuse The symposium will focus on pedophilic sexual interest and online child sexual soliciting behavior in community men as well as sexual abusers of children that work with children.

Empirically, pedophilic sexual interest (PSI) is among the best predictors of sexual recidivism. However, respective prevalence rates in normal community men based on large representative samples are still unknown. Moreover, most small-scale prevalence studies are based on problematic classic self-report assessments of PSI. Over the last decade considerable progress has been made with the development of indirect latency-based measures of PSI. The first two papers (Dombert et al., Schmidt et al.,) give an overview over PSI in a large representative community sample of German men (N = 10.000) as assessed by two different indirect latency-based measures (viewing time task, Snake in the Grass paradigm). Associations with established risk factors of contact and online child sexual offending will be reported. The third paper (Turner et al.) will present data on sexual offending against children in work and institutional contexts. Child sexual offenders working with children were compared to intra- and extrafamilial sexual offenders against children (N = 249). Predictive validity of established risk assessment measures was tested and specific characteristics of child sexual abusers working with children are discussed. In the last paper, Schulz et al. report data from a large international study (N = 2.917) on online sexual soliciting of children from the perspective of the perpetartors. Age of online contact target persons, topics of online communication, and offline meetings are described as well as sexual fantasies as a function of different age groups. Prevalence rates for having engaged in sexual online contacts as well as meeting offline with adolescents and children will be outlined.

## Associations between Pedophilic Interest Measured by the Snake in the Grass Paradigm and Risk Factors for Child Sexual Abuse in a German Community Sample

Beate Dombert, Dipl.-Psych.

Research on pedophilia mainly focused on convicted child sexual abusers of which only 40 to 50% in fact meet the diagnostic criteria for pedophilia (Seto, 2004). Still, the prevalence of pedophilia in the general population is unknown. There are some studies that show that there is a certain amount of sexual interest in children (e.g. Fedora et al., 1992; Santtila et al., 2010) among community samples but the figures vary strongly and it is unclear whether these international findings can be transferred to Germany. The present study was designed to survey the prevalence of pedophilic interest, child sexual abusive behavior and associated risk factors in a German community sample. A sample of N = 10.000 men was recruited via a market research institution. It was taken care that the

sample was as representative as possible with regard to age and education distributions for the adult male population in Germany. The survey was conducted online and had three main foci: First, pedophilic interest was assessed directly (self-report) and indirectly (modified Snake in the Grass paradigm; Antfolk et al., 2012). In the Snake in the Grass (SITG) paradigm nine pictures of nude persons are presented in a 3x3 grid with eight pictures of one category (e.g. adult male) and one target picture of another category (e.g. female child). Participants have to indicate the location of the target as quickly as possible. Reaction times and hit rates in the different combinations of the picture categories indicate sexual orientation and age preference. Second, participants were asked about prior child sexual offending, child pornography use, and engaging in child prostitution and child sex tourism. The third set of questions dealt with known risk factors for child sexual offending (e.g. high sex drive or criminal history). The talk will focus on the comparison between outcomes of pedophilic interest measured by SITG and self-report, and their association with actual child sexual abusive behavior and its other risk factors. Results will be discussed in the presentation.


## Viewing Time and Unmatched Count as Measures of Pedophilic Sexual Interest in a Representative Community Sample of Men


Alexander F. Schmidt, Ph.D.


Prevalence rates of deviant sexual interest in children (DSI) in the normal population are still largely underresearched. In the framework of the study presented in the first paper of the symposium (Dombert et al.) DSI was further assessed utilizing indirect VT and direct Unmatched Count (UC) self-report measures. Empirically, viewing time (VT) is among the best validated latency-based indirect measures of DSI. UC has been developed to prevent response biases due to social desirable responding concerns. It is a survey technique that allows to estimate self-report group prevalences of DSI while at the same time assuring complete confidentiality of their individual status to the respondents. However, precise UC estimations are in need of large samples. Based on a representative sample of N = 10.000 men from the German community UC-estimated DSI prevalence rates for hands-on and online sexual offending against children are reported. Furthermore, associations of VT measures of DSI and known risk factors for child sexual abuse will be described. Scarcely researched child sexual offending behaviors such as child sex tourism and child prostitution among normal community men as well as the relationship of DSI and sexual orientation are explored.


## Risk Assessment in Child Sexual Abusers Working with Children


Daniel Turner, Dipl.-Psych.


**Objectives:** Child sexual abuse occurring within an institution working with children is especially harmful for the victims. Despite this fact not much research has been conducted to evaluate the characteristics of child sexual abusers (CSA) working with children (CSA-W) so far. CSA-W, in previous studies, have usually been included in the group of extra-familial CSA (CSA-E) and not been

reported separately. The present study aimed at evaluating if CSA-W differ from other CSA groups with respect to risk and protective factors and especially indicators of antisocial tendencies and pedophilic sexual interests. **Methods:** Two-hundred and forty-nine forensic-sexological reports about CSA conducted by the Federal Evaluation Centre for Violent and Sexual Offenders (FECVSO) in the Austrian Prison System were evaluated retrospectively. The sample was divided into intra-familial CSA (CSA-I) and extra-familial CSA (CSA-E), on the one hand, and CSA-W, on the other hand. The predictive validity of the Static-99, SVR-20, PCL-R and SAPROF concerning general and sexual recidivism were examined. Further indicators of pedophilic interests and indicators of anti-social tendencies were compared between the three groups. **Results:** CSA-E had the highest risk for recidivism measured with the Static-99, SVR-20 and PCL-R total score followed by CSA-W. CSA-W showed most protective factors. Nevertheless risk assessment instruments could only significantly predict recidivism in the CSA-E and CSA-I but not in the CSA-W group. CSA-W had the highest prevalence of pedophilia diagnoses according to DSM-IV-TR criteria as well as the highest rate of pedophilia oriented on male children, and, consequently, most often male victims in their offences. CSA-W also showed the highest total scores in the Screening Scale for Pedophilic Interests (SSPI). **Conclusions:** CSA-W seem to constitute a group with particular risk factors and criminogenic needs, namely more indicators of pedophilic interests, but less general antisociality and psychopathy and thus seem to be distinguishable from other CSA. Future research should especially evaluate the reasons why common risk assessment instruments seem not to perform well in CSA-W and which other factors might help to predict recidivism in this special offender group.

## Prevalence and Associated Risk Factors of Online Solicitation of Minors in an International Sample

Anja Schulz, Dipl.-Psych.

With the Internet continuously becoming more integrated in the everyday life of even very young children, online solicitation of minors has increasingly been of concern for both practitioners and researchers. Studies in large present prevalence rates of online solicitation based on data gathered from victims or law enforcement professionals, while fewer have assessed the perspective of the perpetrator and have then been restricted to convicted offenders. The present study aimed to reach a wider scope of the problem using an online survey with an international sample of N=2.917 adult Internet users from Finland, Sweden and Germany. Participants reported on their online behavior, including the age of their online contacts, topics of online communication, and offline meetings. Sexual fantasies for different age groups were assessed, as were attitudes regarding to child pornography and online solicitation of minors. Prevalence rates for having engaged in nonsexual versus sexual online contact as well as meeting offline with adolescents and children will be reported, accounting for age, gender, sexual orientation and country of the participants. The association with sexual fantasies of children and condoning attitudes towards child pornography will be portrayed.